

Estill hires Brian Hall as basketball coach

Estill County High School is proud to announce the hiring of former Estill girls coach Brian Hall as the new head boys varsity basketball coach.

Brian is a graduate of McDowell High School in Floyd County, Kentucky, where he played basketball, baseball and golf. Coach Hall continued his basketball and baseball career at Alice Lloyd College. Upon graduation, Brian found a career as a beloved basketball coach. He has 28 years of experience as a basketball coach in Kentucky, including 18 as a head coach. Brian served as the head coach of the Estill County High School girls basketball team for two seasons from 2014-2016. He has taken multiple teams, including many 14th Region teams, on deep postseason runs and has been honored with the 14th Region "Coach of the Year" three times in his career.

"We are very proud to have Coach Hall lead our boys basketball team," said athletic director Austin Moore. "The man has a wealth of experience and knowledge, and his passion for the game of basketball makes him a perfect fit to lead the Engineers. I am excited for the role model he will be for our student-athletes at ECHS,"

Hall served as an assistant coach at Johnson Central for ten years; then went on to be head coach at Brea-

thitt County High School where in his first two years, he achieved his greatest successes of his career. He led the Bobcats to a 26-4 season in 2003-04 and finished as runner up in the 14th Region. Coach Hall was named 14th Region "Coach of the Year" by the Kentucky Association of Basketball Coaches. The following year, his team was 24-6 and reached the semi-finals of the regional tournament.

Hall worked one more year at Breathitt County before moving on in 2006-07 to cross-town rival Jackson City; then the next year to Betsy Lane for a single season.

Coach Hall came to Powell County for the 2008-09 season but saw limited success until the 2011-12 season when he led the Pirates to a 20-13 record, winning the 56th District over Estill County, then advancing to the semi-finals of the 14th Region. He was once again named 14th Region Boys Basketball "Coach of the Year." In the classroom, he was named Teacher of the Year with the "Golden Apple Award."

Hall coached his 5th and 6th seasons at Powell County with mediocre success but was able to get an upset win 49-48 over Estill County for the 56th District title in 2014.

The following year he switched his

Pirates' "Red, Black and White" over to Estill County's "Blue, White and Black" when he took over as head coach of the Lady Engineers girls program and coached two years with improvement over the previous season.

Coach Hall then moved on to coach the Lexington Bryan Station Defenders girls team for five years through the Covid-shortened 2020-21 season.

He succeeds Jon Bentley (192-138), one of Estill's more successful coaches, who went on to coach the Montgomery County Indians after eleven years at Estill. Bentley took his teams to the region every year of his tenure at Estill, winning six district championships, including 2018, when he led the Engineers to the school's first-ever regional championship and a trip to the "Sweet Sixteen" at Rupp Arena.

"We are excited to have Coach Hall join our staff at Estill County High School to lead our boys basketball program going forward and build on our recent success," added ECHS principal Josh Yost. "He brings great experience to the position, and he will be a great leader for student-athletes on and off the court."

"One of the best guys and coaches I've ever been around," said one Facebook comment. "Grand Slam hire."



New ECHS Coach Brian Hall

Emotional baseball season ends with loss to Hazard

On a night up on the hill and all around Danny Wood Field there was an atmosphere like no other in the Commonwealth. More than just baseball and a regional championship, it was two teams, families and communities coming together. It was more than just baseball to all before the first pitch was thrown and again on the final pitch by a young player from Hazard, consoling a Engineer on the final out. It's more than just baseball.

The Engineers got on the scoreboard in the first inning plating four runs on a Andrew Elam double and a Rocky Hix single.

Estill again, in the second inning, scored two more runs on RBI'S by Kamden Powell scoring Coben Clem and Braden Waddell's single to score Powell.

Hazard responded in the second inning with three hits and a error to score three runs off pitcher Hix, Thomas Forehand replaced Hix and struck out Miller to end the inning. 6-3, Estill leads.

Estill offense stalled over the next 5 innings and Hazard scored over 5 innings on 4 hits, 3 miscues and a bad bounce in 6th. The Bulldogs scored

two in the 4th, 1 in the 5th to tie score.

Hazard took the lead in the 6th and scored with 2 outs on bad bounce.

Estill, being the visitors for the evening, had one last at bat in the top of the 7th and the tying run on second but came up empty. Hazard held and won 7-6 over a strong-willed Engineer team.

Estill had 6 runs on 6 hits; Elam and Hix had 2 hits each.

Hazard had 7 runs on 9 hits.

Three Engineers who made the 2021 14th Region All-Tournament Team were Andrew Elam, Ty Niece, and Thomas Forehand.

Bluegrass Sports Nation, by a vote of the coaches, named the late Blake Crowe as the 2021 Coach of the Year for the 14th Region. Catcher Braeden Waddell, pitcher Andrew Elam, and shortstop Kamden Powell were named to the 2021 All-Region Team.

Junior Ty Niece was named to participate in the East/West All-Star game.

The Engineers finished 20-13 for the season and were 7-0 to win the 56th District Season title.

Also the champions of the 56th

District, the Estill County Engineers, had won over Perry County Central in their first game of regionals.

The Engineers powered past the Commodores 14-4 in the 8:00 p.m. prime time game.

PCC jumped to a 2-0 in the top of the 1st on a 2RBI dinger by PCC's Macolarnis. The Engineers answered with a Niece walk, Powell singled and Waddell was hit by pitch.

Elam and Forehand walks and back to back to plate 2 runners and a sacrifice fly by Rocky Hix, and Estill leads 3-3 after 1.

Engineers extended the lead in the 4th on back to back singles by Powell and Braeden Waddell and a walk to Andrew Elam to load the bases. Thomas Forehand hit a 2 RBI single and a RBI was hit by Rocky Hix. Ethan Henry hit by pitch scored Forehand, and a Niece walk scores Tucker. 8-3 Estill.

Estill added on in the 5th, Waddell led off with single and Elam singles in pinch runner Puckett. Forehand, Hix draw walks, Henry singles to score 2, Coben Clem followed with a single, Tye Niece scores Henry and Estill leads 13-4 going into the top of 6th.

In the 6th Lucas Flynn replaces

Elam, gets an out and Thomas Forehand relieves Flynn with bases loaded and throws 10 pitches and strikes out the 4-5 batter in lineup to end the threat in top of the 6th.

Estill closed out the game on 10 run rule as Waddell, Elam single and pinch runner Fletcher scores winning run on a Henry single. 14-4 final.

Elam led the Engineers to victory, pitcher lasted four and two-thirds innings, allowing four hits and four runs while striking out ten.

Engineers hit the ball well racking up 13 hits in the game. Waddell had 3 hits/ 3 RBI, Forehand 2 hits/ 3 RBI and Henry 2 hits 4 RBI. Elam, Powell added 2 hits and Hix had 2 RBI on the night.

PCC's McAlarnis led Perry County Central in the loss with a HR and single in four at bats. Elkins took the loss for Perry Co. Central.

Estill got into the title game with a 11-2 win over Letcher County Central.

Ty Niece scored four runs on three hits and had three stolen bases. Elam and Forehand had two rbi's each. Elam, Waddell and Forehand had two hits each.

Record breaking Lady Engineers end season 32-5

The season ended for the Estill County Lady Engineers fastpitch softball team a lot sooner than expected but Coach Lynn West's 2021 squad will go down in the record books as one of the best in Estill County history as will their record-breaking pitcher Emma Winkle.

The Engineers finished 32-5 overall and as in nearly all past years never lost a game in 56th District play to finish 7-0 with both the season and tournament titles.

Five players were named All-District for the 56th including Lauren Farmer, Maci Muncie, Emma Winkle, Katie Johnson, and Neesa West; and Winkle received MVP honors and the J. L. Thomas Award named for the late Estill softball coach.

The Lady Engineers went 15-1 in 14th Region play but that one loss was the one that hurt worse, the 12-8 loss to the eventual regional champ Wolfe County that eliminated Estill from competition.

Winkle and Muncie were named to the 14th's All-Region Team.

Estill's Lady Engineers return all players to next year's squad. Good luck, Lynn West and Lady Engineers.

Emma Winkle had broken the Estill record for strike outs earlier on May 25th with 305 and ended the year with 314. She and another junior pitcher Lauren Farmer combined for 356 strike outs for the season. Both have been chosen for the East Juniors team to play in the East/West All-Star game on Tuesday and Wednesday, June 22 & 23, at South Warren

High School in Bowling Green, Kentucky.

As in the tradition of all past Estill County Lady Engineers teams, several have been named to the All-State Academic Team which is based on grade point average. This is sponsored by the Kentucky Softball Coaches Association (KSCA).

Only juniors and seniors are eligible, so last year, Estill had only one player, a senior, Kaylee Riddell, who was chosen since there were no juniors playing. No other awards were given out last year because play was cancelled and no plans were originally being made for the Academic All-State until a request was made to KSCA from this newspaper and was approved.

This year, juniors named are Lauren Farmer, Honorable Men-

tion (3.25-3.49); Henlee Hunter, First Team (3.75+); Katie Johnson, Second Team (3.5-3.74); Mariah Riddell, Honorable Mention (3.25-3.49); and Emma Winkle, First Team (3.75+).

The Estill County Lady Engineers continues its tradition of high academics along with a high level of play. Since 2003, nearly every eligible Lady Engineer has been named Academic All-State.

Kentucky Prep Softball and the Kentucky Softball Coaches Association continue to support fastpitch softball in the state. Estill coaches have continued to hold membership in this group, and one Estill coach and one Estill County native have been named to the KSCA "Hall of Fame."

Ravenna native and Montgomery County

softball and basketball Engineers' own, retired coach Bart Rison was named to the Kentucky Prep Softball Hall of Fame in 2009. Rison took several Montgomery teams to the State from the 10th Region. He is also a highly-regarded umpire. The Estill County Lady

coach Shirley Beard was named to the KPS Hall of Fame in 2016. The first team Beard took to the State was in the 10th Region and she followed that with numerous State Tournament teams in the 14th Region.

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